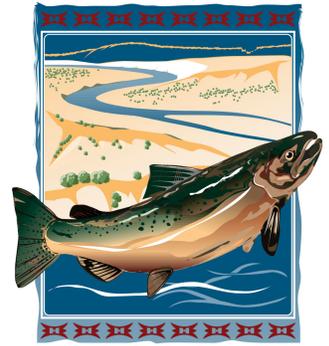




Columbia River Corridor

Fact Sheet • August 2002

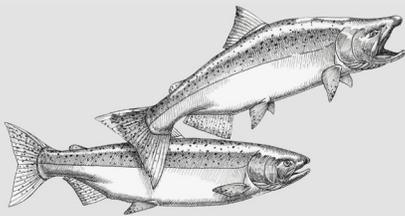


FWS photo: William Radke

Unit Size
25,000 acres

History and Administration

Since 1943, the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) has held title to the lands that make up this and all other units that became part of the Hanford Reach National Monument in 2000. Administration of this unit is multijurisdictional and complex, with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Land Management, DOE, various Washington State agencies, and the sheriff's departments of Benton, Franklin and Grant Counties all playing specific roles.



FWS illustration: Ken Morris

To Contact the Monument
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Location

This unit includes most of the Hanford Reach of the Columbia River, river islands, the 6,320-acre Hanford Dune Field, and a 1/4-mile-wide corridor on the south and west sides of the river.

Habitats

The Hanford Reach is the only non-tidal, free-flowing stretch of the Columbia River within the United States. The river, islands, gravel bars, sloughs, riparian areas and dune field provide many habitats that are now rare along the Columbia River due to the extensive reservoir system.

Rare Plants

Columbia yellowcress grows in the gravelly river shore of the Reach. Potential habitat for northern wormwood, a federal candidate species, exists on many of the islands.

Fish

Conditions in the Hanford Reach promote spawning success for salmonids, sturgeon and bass. The Reach supports the largest spawning population (up to 90 percent) of fall Chinook salmon on the mainstem of the Columbia River. Three federally threatened salmonid populations—Upper and Middle Columbia River steelhead and Upper Columbia River spring Chinook—use the Hanford Reach for migration.

Wildlife

Riverine habitat along the Hanford Reach is used extensively by migrating waterfowl, shorebirds and water birds. The island shorelines serve as prime nesting areas for great blue herons, Canada geese and ring-billed and California gulls. Deer use the islands when having their fawns in order to escape predators. The islands are also

one of the few places in Washington where state-endangered American white pelicans can commonly be seen. Bald eagles concentrate along the Hanford Reach during the winter months due to the salmon and other fish resources present.

Public Uses

The Hanford Reach surface waters and some of the shoreline are open year-round. The southwest shore from Vernita Bridge to river mile 343, and all islands between Vernita Bridge and the Bonneville Power line crossing (river mile 351) are closed to the public. These open areas support a variety of recreational activities, especially boating, fishing and hunting.

Cultural Resources

The inter-relationship between people and rivers give this unit the most concentrated and diverse cultural resources on the Monument. The area was a crossroads and traditional use area for many Native Americans. Numerous pithouse villages and fishing, gathering and processing sites have been identified. In the 1850s, Smohalla, the spiritual leader of the Wanapum people, envisioned the "Seven Drums" religion at Coyote Rapids. The historic towns of Hanford and White Bluffs, as well as several ferry crossings, were located in this unit. Evidence of early irrigation efforts prior to the Columbia Basin Project are still visible, including the Hanford Ditch and Allard Pump House.

